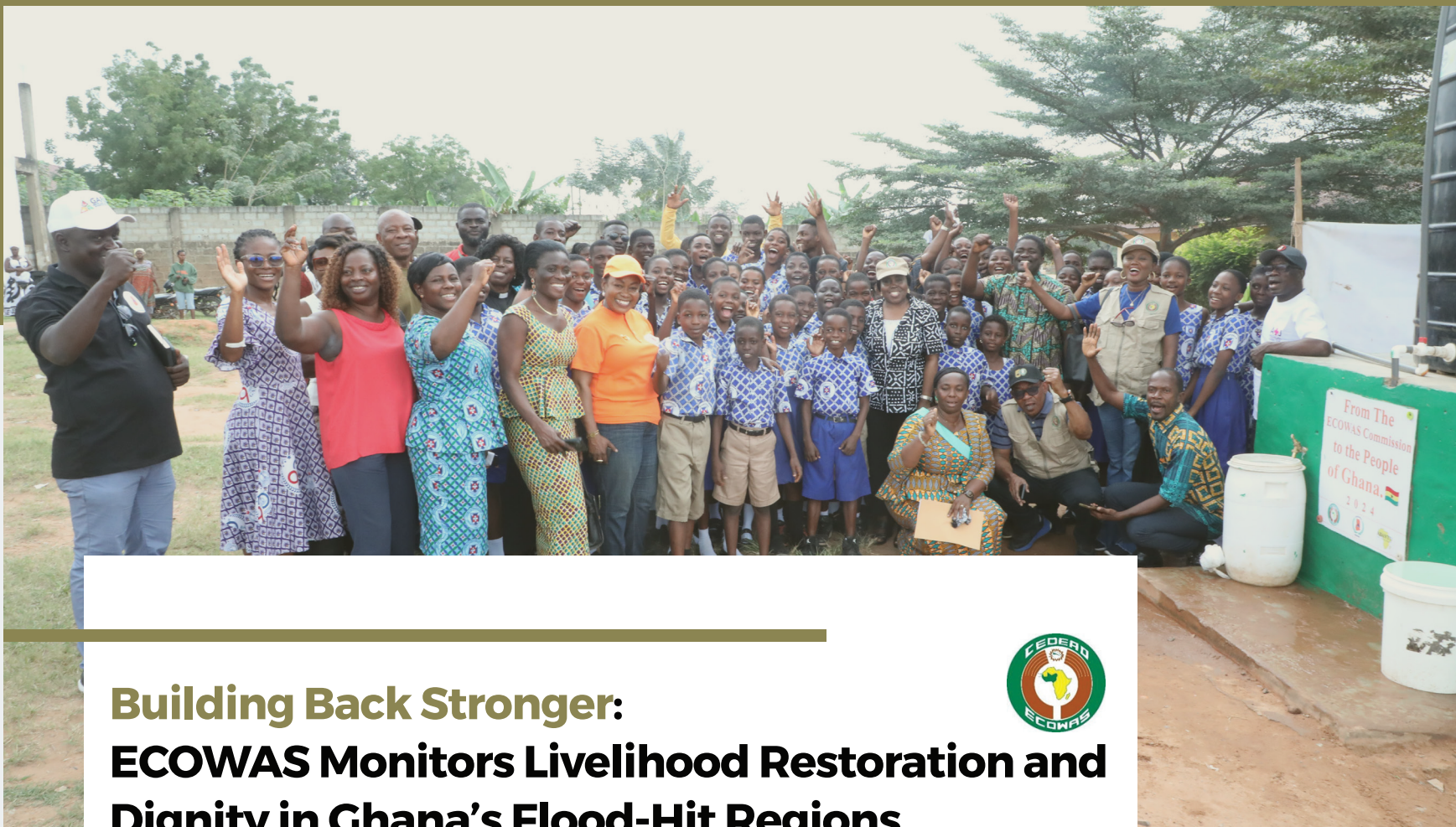




Building Back Stronger: ECOWAS Monitors Livelihood Restoration and Dignity in Ghana's Flood-Hit Regions



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Ga West, Ghana

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Correspondence should be addressed to:

Email: info@ecowas.int

Twitter: [@ecowas_cedeao](https://twitter.com/ecowas_cedeao)

Instagram: [@ecowas_cedeao](https://www.instagram.com/ecowas_cedeao)

Facebook: [@ecowas.cedeao](https://www.facebook.com/ecowas.cedeao)

Website: www.ecowas.int

Editorial Production(s):

Prof. Fatou Sow Sarr - Commissioner, Human Development and Social Affairs, ECOWAS Commission

Dr. Sintiki Tarfa Ugbe - Director, Humanitarian and Social Affairs, ECOWAS Commission

Mrs. Charlotte Norman, Director Climate Change, NADMO

Dr. Kwasi Amoako Mphil, Director GIS, NADMO

Delegation(s):

Nkoyo Francesca Echabor - Programme Officer, Humanitarian Operations/EERT, ECOWAS Commission

Godfrey Amaechi Alozie - Programme Officer, Emergency Logistics and Planning, ECOWAS Commission

Amamata Suleiman - Communication Officer, ECOWAS Commission

Sani Malgwi - Camera Man, Videographer, ECOWAS Commission

Resource Person:

Dr. Frederick A. Atenaga - Disaster Manager, Data Scientist and Business Analyst



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Executive Summary

The ECOWAS Commission, through its Humanitarian Affairs Directorate, has demonstrated strong regional leadership in addressing the humanitarian needs of flood-affected communities in Ghana. Following the devastating floods of 2022 in Greater Accra and Eastern regions, ECOWAS partnered with the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) and local actors to deliver immediate relief and lay the foundation for resilience. With a budgetary commitment of over USD 315,000, the program supported displaced families, restored livelihoods, and strengthened national capacities to respond to future crises.

The response was characterized by multi-layered interventions: emergency food and non-food distributions reached over 5,143 households, WASH services were expanded with the drilling of 10 boreholes and hygiene campaigns, and more than 190 individuals received entrepreneurship and financial literacy training. Livelihood restoration targeted

farmers, artisans, and small-scale entrepreneurs, ensuring recovery extended beyond survival to sustainability. Institutional capacity was also prioritized. ECOWAS supported training for 40 NADMO staff on disaster risk reduction, early warning, and community mobilization. Schools in Amasaman and Nsawam Adoagyiri received industrial handwashing basins and sanitation training, safeguarding over 2,700 pupils from waterborne disease risks.

Despite these achievements, significant gaps remain. Shelter shortages, poor access roads, contaminated water points, lack of fencing in schools, and unreliable electricity continue to hinder recovery. Rapid urbanization has reduced farmland availability, affecting long-term food security. This report highlights the interventions delivered, key achievements, and persisting gaps, while also underscoring lessons learned. It affirms ECOWAS and NADMO's pivotal role in strengthening Ghana's disaster response framework, building resilience in frontline communities, and reinforcing the principle of solidarity across West Africa.

The Overview

Ghana has witnessed increasing climate shocks, with the 2022 floods serving as a stark reminder of the fragility of disaster management systems in flood-prone areas. The Greater Accra Region, including Nsawam Adoagyiri, Ga West, Ga South, and Weija Gbawe, bore the brunt of destruction, with thousands displaced, livelihoods destroyed, and public health risks rising sharply.

In this context, ECOWAS acted as both financier and technical partner, mobilizing regional solidarity to assist Ghana. The program was anchored in a dual strategy: addressing immediate humanitarian needs while simultaneously enhancing resilience through capacity building, infrastructure support, and livelihood recovery.

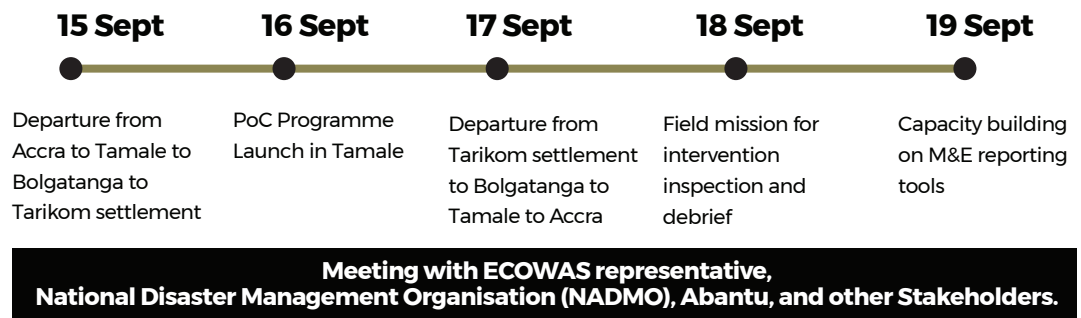
Community-centered approaches shaped the intervention. Local leaders, traditional authorities, and grassroots organizations were actively involved to ensure cultural appropriateness and foster ownership. This alignment with ECOWAS's localization agenda underscored the importance of empowering national systems rather than creating parallel structures.

The program also sought to harmonize humanitarian action with Ghana's broader development plans. For exam-

ple, livelihood support was aligned with the Ghana Refugee Agribusiness Sustainability Programme (GRASP) and the national Feed Ghana initiative, ensuring complementarity with government strategies.

The WASH component further demonstrated integration. Schools were equipped with hygiene facilities and menstrual hygiene management training, improving health outcomes and reducing absenteeism, especially among adolescent girls. Yet, the humanitarian landscape remains complex. Shelter deficits persist as families live in overcrowded or deteriorating structures. The lack of fencing around schools has created safety concerns for children. Electricity shortages and poor feeder roads restrict access to services, while contaminated groundwater threatens WASH gains. These gaps highlight the need for sustained multi-stakeholder investment beyond immediate relief.

Timeline





31,000
People in need



21,242
People targeted



21,242
People reached



100%
People covered



0%
People over-reached



604,576
Funding Received



10
Schools with WASH



4
Districts assessed



56%
Female respondents



44%
Male respondents

Humanitarian Response

The ECOWAS–NADMO partnership in Ghana delivered a diverse humanitarian response that reached over 5,143 households with essential food and non-food supplies, prioritizing the most vulnerable groups such as women-headed households and the elderly. Beyond immediate relief, the program focused on building resilience by supporting 90 farmers with climate-smart inputs and providing artisans with tools and start-up kits, ensuring communities could restore livelihoods and regain self-reliance. These efforts directly complemented national initiatives like Feed Ghana and GRASP, further strengthening alignment with government development priorities. Capacity development was a central pillar of the intervention. 190 participants benefited from entrepreneurship and financial literacy training, enabling them to have access to improve economic opportunities. On the institutional front, 40 NADMO staff received training in disaster risk reduction and early warning, supported by a manual and monitoring tools that enhanced coordination and reporting. Schools and communities also gained from WASH interventions, with 10 boreholes drilled, handwashing facilities installed



for 2,700 pupils, and hygiene education provided, significantly reducing public health risks.

The response was rooted in strong community engagement and regional solidarity. Local authorities and traditional leaders actively participated in mobilization, while refugee-hosting communities such as Tarikom were included in the program to reinforce social cohesion. Media visibility and documented human-interest stories showcased the tangible impact on families, strengthening donor confidence and demonstrating ECOWAS's commitment to a people-centered approach. This integrated response not only alleviated immediate suffering but also laid the foundation for long-term resilience and sustainable recovery.



Emergency Relief Distribution

- Over 5,143 households received food packages including rice, maize, oil, and sugar.
- Non-food items such as mattresses, buckets, bowls, and clothing were prioritized for the most vulnerable, including female-headed households and the elderly.

Livelihood Recovery

- Support targeted 90 farmers with climate-smart seeds, greenhouse inputs, and modern tools.
- Artisans such as carpenters, masons, beauticians, tillers, caterers, snail farmers, and soap makers benefited from restored tools and start-up kits.
- Livelihood recovery activities directly complemented GRASP and the national Feed Ghana program.

Entrepreneurship and Financial Literacy Training

- 190 participants trained over 10 sessions in budgeting, business planning, and credit management.
- Certification enabled participants to access loans and grants.

WASH Infrastructure and Training

- 10 boreholes drilled in priority locations, significantly reducing reliance on unsafe water sources.
- Industrial handwashing basins distributed to Amasaman and Nsawam schools, serving 2,700 pupils.

- Training modules covered hygiene, menstrual health, waste management, and food safety.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Capacity

- 40 NADMO staff trained on early warning, response planning, and post-disaster strategies.
- A training manual was developed for continued reference and replication.

Institutional Strengthening

- ECOWAS support equipped NADMO and partners with tools for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.
- Regional workshops enabled knowledge sharing on needs assessments and targeting.

Community Engagement

- Traditional leaders and local authorities actively participated in planning and mobilization.
- Refugee-hosting communities such as Tarikom were included in livelihood and WASH interventions, reinforcing peaceful coexistence.

Visibility and Advocacy

- Media coverage in outlets like Daily Graphic and GBC highlighted project impact.
- Human-interest stories documented family-level change, strengthening donor confidence.

The Human Interest Stories

In the vibrant yet flood-affected community of Ga South Weija district in Ghana, 68-year-old Afua Akyaa Ceceilia has shown remarkable resilience in the face of hardship. Originally from the Ashanti region, she relocated to Accra where she sustained her family through a small charcoal business. When



Afua Akyaa Ceceilia

floods destroyed part of her home and disrupted her business, she was forced to send her grandson to live with her mother. The losses left her with little to hold onto, yet she remained determined to rebuild her life. Her breakthrough came when she heard about an ECOWAS-supported training in soap, antiseptic, and detergent making. She joined the program with the hope of finding a new source of livelihood. Starting small, Afua Akyaa Ceceilia went door to door selling her products. The

work was physically demanding, especially at her age, but her persistence began to pay off. Gradually, her products gained recognition, and her determination started turning into a sustainable business.

With seed support of 200 cedis from ECOWAS for ingredients, she quickly began making profits. Today, she is no longer just selling soap, she is receiving larger orders, including one for 15 gallons of detergent. Even more inspiring, she has trained four other people in her community, sharing the same skills that transformed her own life. What began as a survival effort has grown into a small business that contributes to her family's stability and inspires others.

Reflecting on her journey, Afua Akyaa Ceceilia says with gratitude, **"I advise the youth to take up skills beyond their daily work to earn extra income. I no longer buy soap from outside, and now I can save money."** Her words capture both the relief and empowerment that ECOWAS's intervention has brought. While challenges remain, especially due to her age and limited logistics support, her story is a testament to the transformative impact of targeted humanitarian assistance.

In the community of Ga West in Ghana's Greater Accra region, 43-year-old Evangelist Vincent Kpornto has carried the weight of hardship with quiet strength. A herbalist and devoted father of four daughters, he built his life near a stream that sustained his household. But in recent years, heavy floods have brought



Evangelist Vincent Kpornto

destruction. One of his darkest moments came when his youngest child was swept away by floodwaters, narrowly surviving after a desperate rescue. The flooding worsened when a prayer camp upstream dug a fishpond that obstructed the natural flow of water, leaving Vincent and his neighbours more vulnerable than ever.

Determined to protect his family, Vincent sought help from NADMO, which facilitated community meetings with local authorities and the

pond owners. These engagements laid the groundwork for broader interventions, but it was the support from ECOWAS that brought lasting relief. Through their assistance, clean water was made available to his community, reducing both the risk of disease and the constant fear parents lived with. For Vincent, the intervention brought not just water but peace of mind, allowing him to focus again on his work and his family's well-being.

"ECOWAS should replicate such a kind gesture in other communities and schools," Vincent shared with gratitude. His words capture the relief that came when a pressing need was finally addressed, transforming daily life in Ga West. For him and many others, clean water has meant healthier children, restored confidence, and hope for a safer future. The intervention became a lifeline, proving how regional support can translate into real change at the household level.

Yet challenges remain. The stream that once carried his child away still requires professional engineering solutions to prevent future flooding. Vincent also calls for stronger incentives to keep communities engaged in resilience-building efforts. His journey illustrates the strength of families who endure hardship and the powerful impact of humanitarian action when it reaches those most in need.

In the community of Nsawam Adoagyiri in Ghana's Eastern Region lives 45-year-old Naomi Larbi, a single mother of three who has weathered many storms. She once relied on selling books and stationery from a small table to provide for her family. When floods swept through her neighbourhood, her



Naomi Larbi

house and surroundings were submerged, making movement difficult and pushing her business to the brink. Sales dropped sharply, and with three children depending on her, every day became a test of strength and endurance.

Her turning point came when ECOWAS introduced training opportunities aimed at restoring livelihoods. Naomi enrolled in a short but intensive program on snail and mushroom farming. With a start-up grant of 500 cedis, she began mushroom production, earning between 200 and 300

cedis in profit. During snail season, her investment of 300 cedis yielded returns of up to 500 cedis. Trainers not only equipped her with materials but also provided ongoing mentorship, ensuring she was never alone in navigating this new trade. For Naomi, this was more than just training; it was the beginning of a stable source of income that could support her children's education and daily needs.

Reflecting on her journey, Naomi expressed deep gratitude. **"When opportunities like this come again, I will encourage others to take part,"** she said with pride. Her success has inspired others in her community to learn from her, but the lack of space to expand her work remains a challenge. With demand for mushrooms and snails growing, she sees the potential to reach more families with affordable, nutritious food. The intervention has not only helped her recover but has positioned her as a role model in her community.

Naomi's story shows both the transformative power of timely support and the ongoing needs that remain. She dreams of larger facilities, better temperature-controlled spaces for mushroom farming, and recognition that would allow her to showcase her work. With continued investment from ECOWAS and NADMO, her small venture can grow into a sustainable enterprise that meets nutritional needs while securing her children's future.

In the Medie community of Ga West Municipal Assembly, 36-year-old Ruth Addai has built her life around resilience and hope. Married with four children, she moved to the area a year and a half ago after floods destroyed the house she rented.

Searching for shelter was difficult since many homes in the

community had also been damaged. Once a tailor, Ruth turned to selling second-hand clothes to sustain her family. Yet life remained tough, especially with poor water quality that affected her household's health and daily routines.

The biggest challenge for Ruth was watching her children struggle at school without access to clean water. She recalls how they often used their uniforms to wipe their hands because there were no proper facilities. Drinking water had to be boiled and filtered, but it was never



Ruth Addai

truly safe. These hardships weighed heavily on her, as she worked to give her children a better future in an already strained environment.

Her turning point came with the intervention of ECOWAS.

Through its humanitarian support, her community gained access to safe water. For Ruth, the change was immediate and profound. Her children could now attend school with clean uniforms, drink water without fear, and practice proper hygiene.

This improvement, though simple, transformed daily life and lifted a heavy burden off her shoulders. As she put it, **“Helping humanity is the best gift anyone can give. Pay attention to what happens in your children’s school.”**

Even as she celebrates these gains, Ruth acknowledges that much remains to be done. Schools in her community still lack fencing and proper roofing, leaving children vulnerable. She believes addressing these gaps is essential to build on the progress achieved so far. Ruth’s story is a powerful reminder of how ECOWAS’s support has brought dignity and relief to her family, while also showing the urgent need for continued investment to secure a safer and brighter future for communities like Medie.

In the community of Oblogo in the Weija-Gbawe district of Ghana, 35-year-old

Celestine Addo lives with her husband and two children.

Her life was thrown into turmoil when flooding struck the area. The water submerged property around her home and put families at risk, particularly with fears that the nearby



Celestine Addo

Weija Dam could break. Celestine lost her belongings and was forced to use her savings just to replace basic items for her family. Her small shop, once a source of stability, became the last thing on her mind as she struggled to cope with the weight of the losses.

For months, Celestine lived with discouragement, unsure if she could ever return to business again. The floods had left her not only financially drained but emotionally defeated. It was in this difficult moment that ECOWAS, through its humanitarian program, extended a lifeline.

Celestine was enrolled in a four-day training on pastry making, where she received both skills and essential start-up support. She was provided with pastry equipment, baking utensils, margarine, a small bag of flour, and 500 cedis in logistics support. With her own oven and new knowledge, she began baking, and soon her flyer went viral in the community. Orders poured in, and what once felt like an ending became the beginning of something far greater.

Speaking with gratitude, Celestine said, **“Thank you to ECOWAS. I always thought they worked outside Ghana, I never knew they could do this for us.”** Her words reflect both surprise and appreciation for a program that directly touched her life. The intervention restored her sense of purpose and turned her into a provider not only for her family but also for her neighbours who now benefit from her growing business. Her journey is an example of how targeted support can transform despair into opportunity.

While Celestine’s story is one of hope, she also highlights the importance of sustained follow-up. Her recovery shows the strength of resilience when backed by the right support. With continued investment, Celestine and many others like her in Oblogo can build stronger livelihoods, protect their families from future shocks, and contribute to the development of their communities.

In the riverside community of Afuaman in Ga West, 43-year-old Joyce Osei has endured hardship with quiet strength. Once married, she is now a single mother living with her own mother. Before disaster struck, Joyce sustained her family by running a small shop where she sold garri, pepper, and other daily goods.



Joyce Osei

When the Desu River overflowed, floodwaters rushed into her compound, forcing her family to evacuate. They survived on temporary relief items until the water receded, but the damage to her home and livelihood was devastating. For Joyce, the economic challenges in the country only deepened the burden of starting over.

Amid the uncertainty, Joyce took a leap of faith by applying for an ECOWAS training program, even though she admitted she knew little about the organization. She was trained in skills such as facial care,

pedicures, and manicures, which gave her a fresh direction and a chance to rebuild. At first, the lack of start-up resources left her discouraged, but ECOWAS later provided her with a make-up kit that became the foundation for her new path. The support, though modest, reignited her confidence and gave her a means to earn an income once again.

Reflecting on her journey, Joyce expressed heartfelt gratitude: **“ECOWAS has done well, but with more funding support we can improve our business.”** Her words highlight the tangible impact the intervention has had on her life, while also underscoring the continuing need for investment. Today, Joyce is slowly regaining stability for herself and her children. What once seemed like the end of her livelihood has turned into a new beginning, thanks to the timely intervention she received. Yet Joyce’s story also points to challenges that remain. With only a single kit, her ability to expand is limited, and she dreams of opening a proper shop where she can serve more customers and provide for her family with dignity.

In the vibrant community of Weija-Gbawe in the Greater Accra Region, 41-year-old Nancy Boakye lives with her husband and two children. For years she built her life around a small salon that provided for her family and gave her a sense of pride. When devastating floods struck the area, Nancy's home was submerged, and her salon was swept away. In one moment, she lost her business, her possessions, and the stability her family relied on. She recalls the pain of watching her life's work washed away, uncertain how to begin again. The turning point came when ECOWAS, through its humanitarian support, reached Nancy's community. She was selected for a four-day training program designed to help women like her recover their livelihoods. With new skills and encouragement, Nancy took the bold step of reopening her salon, even if on a smaller scale than before. The



Nancy Boakye

training, coupled with the support she received, provided her with the tools to restart her business and regain her confidence. Being located near a school, she slowly began attracting customers again, allowing her to rebuild piece by piece. Nancy speaks with deep emotion about what the intervention has meant for her: **"I am thankful to ECOWAS. Their support has touched my life in ways I never expected."** Her gratitude reflects the real transformation that has taken place, not only for her and her children but also for the wider community that benefits from her renewed services. Her story embodies the resilience of women who, with the right support, can turn despair into opportunity and rebuild stronger than before. Yet, Nancy's journey also highlights the gaps that remain. While she has managed to reopen her salon, it is not as large or equipped as it once was, and she dreams of expanding to meet growing community demand. Sustained support and investment are essential to ensure her progress is not only maintained but scaled up.

Gaps

Despite the successes, field reports identified critical gaps that require immediate attention:

1. Refugees and flood-affected households still face inadequate shelter, with structures deteriorating under extreme weather.
2. Schools lack proper fencing, exposing children to risks and disrupting safe learning environments.
3. Several settlements and schools remain without electricity, limiting safety, education, and livelihoods.
4. Poor feeder roads hinder the distribution of relief and delay response operations.
5. Groundwater contamination was discovered in some boreholes, requiring additional resources for water treatment
6. Exchange rate fluctuations and rapid urbanization affected planned beneficiary numbers and reduced agricultural land availability.

Recommendations

To consolidate gains and address persistent challenges, the following are recommended:

1. Invest in durable, climate-resilient housing for flood-affected families and refugees.
2. Prioritize fencing, electricity, and WaSH facilities in schools to safeguard children.
3. Scaling of successful interventions to other flood-prone districts across Ghana.
4. Mobilize resources for feeder road rehabilitation to ensure timely delivery of aid.
5. Institutionalize groundwater monitoring and provide resources for treatment.
6. Integrate flood-affected farmers and artisans into national agribusiness programs such as GRASP and “Feed Ghana.”
7. Institutionalize DRR refresher training for NADMO and district officials, ensuring knowledge retention.
8. Strengthen community WatSan committees and cooperatives for sustainability.
9. Expansion of livelihood initiatives with microfinance access.

Conclusion

The recent monitoring and evaluation mission by the ECOWAS Commission Humanitarian Affairs Directorate to Ghana highlighted the success of truly people-centered interventions. Visiting three districts across two regions, the team witnessed first-hand the remarkable stories of resilience and transformation brought about by ECOWAS-supported projects.

Human-interest stories from these communities showed how access to basic services, vocational training, and community support have enabled individuals to overcome adversity, rebuild their livelihoods, and reclaim their dignity. These outcomes affirm that when interventions are designed with people at the center, they inspire sustainable change and break cycles of vulnerability.

The mission also confirmed that the ripple effects of ECOWAS programs extend far beyond immediate relief. Empowered individuals are uplifting their families and communities, creating an environment where hope and opportunity thrive.

The team also noted pressing challenges, including bad road networks that slow down response efforts, limited schools for children, scarce economic opportunities, and the strain of rising inflation. These gaps underscore the importance of continued investment, innovation, and strengthened collaboration with governments, civil society, and donors to consolidate progress and ensure that no gains are lost.



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"In the wake of devastating floods, restoring livelihoods and dignity is not just a necessity—it is the cornerstone of renewal for those whose lives have been upended. For the people of Ghana affected by the floods, rebuilding goes beyond physical shelter; it is about reigniting hope, strengthening resilience, and empowering communities to rise stronger than before."

— Dr. Sintiki Tarfa Ugbe, Humanitarian Affairs Directorate.